

Message Text

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ACTION PM-03

INFO OCT-01 EA-06 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 H-02 INR-07 L-02

NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 PRS-01 SP-02 SS-15 USIA-06

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R 050048Z APR 75

FM AMEMBASSY CANBERRA

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 5417

S E C R E T CANBERRA 2087

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: MARR, PFOR

SUBJECT: INCLUSION OF USS LONG BEACH IN CORAL SEA

TASK FORCE VISIT TO AUSTRALIA

SUMMARY: SECRETARY OF DEPT OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS, ALAN RENOUF, HAS ASKED ME TO PROVIDE DFA WITH TALKING PAPER WHICH CLEARLY SETS OUT REASONS WHY U.S. CANNOT RPT CANNOT GIVE ASSURANCES THAT THERE ARE NO RPT NO NUCLEAR WEAPONS ON VISITING U.S. NPW'S. RENOUF ALSO SUGGESTED THAT U.S. MIGHT CONSIDER SUBSTITUTING LESS CONSPICUOUS NPW FOR LONG BEACH IN CORAL SEA TASKS FORCE. ACTION REQUESTED: THAT DEPT PROVIDE EMBASSY WITH TALKING PAPER FOR PRESENTATION TO DFA ON APRIL 8, SETTING OUT REASONS WHY U.S. CANNOT GIVE ASSURANCES THAT THERE ARE NO NUCLEAR WEAPONS ON VISITING U.S. NAVAL VESSELS, WHETHER THEY ARE NUCLEAR POWERED OR NOT. END SUMMARY.

IN GENERAL DISCUSSION WITH ME ON APRIL 4, DFA SECRETARY ALAN RENOUF SAID THAT JOHN MENADUE (SECRETARY OF PRIME MINISTER'S DEPARTMENT) HAD CALLED HIM AND ASKED WHETHER IT WOULD BE POSSIBLE FOR U.S. OR GOA TO ISSUE STATEMENT AT TIME OF PROPOSED CORAL SEA TASK FORCE VISIT TO WESTERN AUSTRALIA (TENTATIVELY SCHEDULED TO BEGIN MAY 7 IF SHIPS AVAILABLE), TO THE EFFECT THAT THERE ARE NO NUCLEAR WEAPONS ON BOARD USS LONG BEACH OR, PRESUMABLY, ANY OTHER NPW

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ACCOMPANYING TASK FORCE. (GOA ASSUMES THAT LONG BEACH

WILL BE PART OF TASK FORCE.) RENOUF IS AWARE OF OUR POSITION IN RESPONDING TO SUCH QUESTIONS.

MENADUE TOLD RENOUF THAT HE THOUGHT PRIME MINISTER WHITLAM WOULD RAISE THIS QUESTION WHEN HE IS CONSIDERING A FINAL DECISION ON NPW ISSUE. RENOUF STRESSED FACT THAT MENADUE WAS NOT RPT NOT REFLECTING AT THIS POINT ANY POSITION WHICH PRIME MINISTER HAD YET TAKEN ON NPW VISITS, BUT IS ANTICIPATING WHAT HE BELIEVES WHITLAM WOULD WANT TO HAVE. IN ANY EVENT, ACCORDING TO RENOUF, FOREIGN MINISTER WILLESEE, WHO FAVORS RESUMPTION OF NPW VISITS TO AUSTRALIA, WOULD LIKE A TALKING PAPER WHICH STATES REASONS WHY U.S. CANNOT GIVE ASSURANCES THAT THERE ARE NO NUCLEAR WEAPONS ON VISITING U.S. NPW'S. WILLESEE WOULD THUS BE FULLY PREPARED WHEN HE RAISES NPW ISSUE WITH PRIME MINISTER NEXT WEEK.

RENOUF ALSO SUGGESTED THAT U.S. MIGHT WISH TO CONSIDER SUBSTITUTING A LESS CONSPICUOUS NPW FOR LONG BEACH IN PROPOSED CORAL SEA TASK FORCE.

COMMENT: REALIZE THAT TIME IS SHORT, BUT IT IS IN OUR INTEREST TO PROVIDE RATIONALE WHY WE CANNOT GIVE ASSURANCES ON PRESENCE OF NUCLEAR WEAPONS ON U.S. SHIPS. WE SEEM TO BE COMING CLOSER TO DECISION BY GOA ON NPW VISITS, AND CONTEXT SUGGESTS DECISION COULD BE FAVORABLE ONE. WE DO NOT KNOW IF EITHER USS BAINBRIDGE OR USS TRUXTUN ARE IN PACIFIC, BUT, IF SO, THEY MIGHT REPLACE LONG BEACH. VISIT BY ANY U.S. SURFACE NPW WILL MEET OUR IMMEDIATE REQUIREMENTS, BUT THE LOWER ITS QTE PROFILE END QTE, THE BETTER IN TERMS OF OUR MAKING BREAKTHROUGH ON NPW VISITS.
GREEN

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Message Attributes

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